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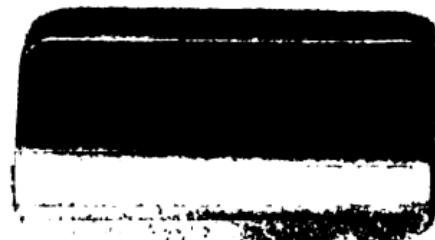
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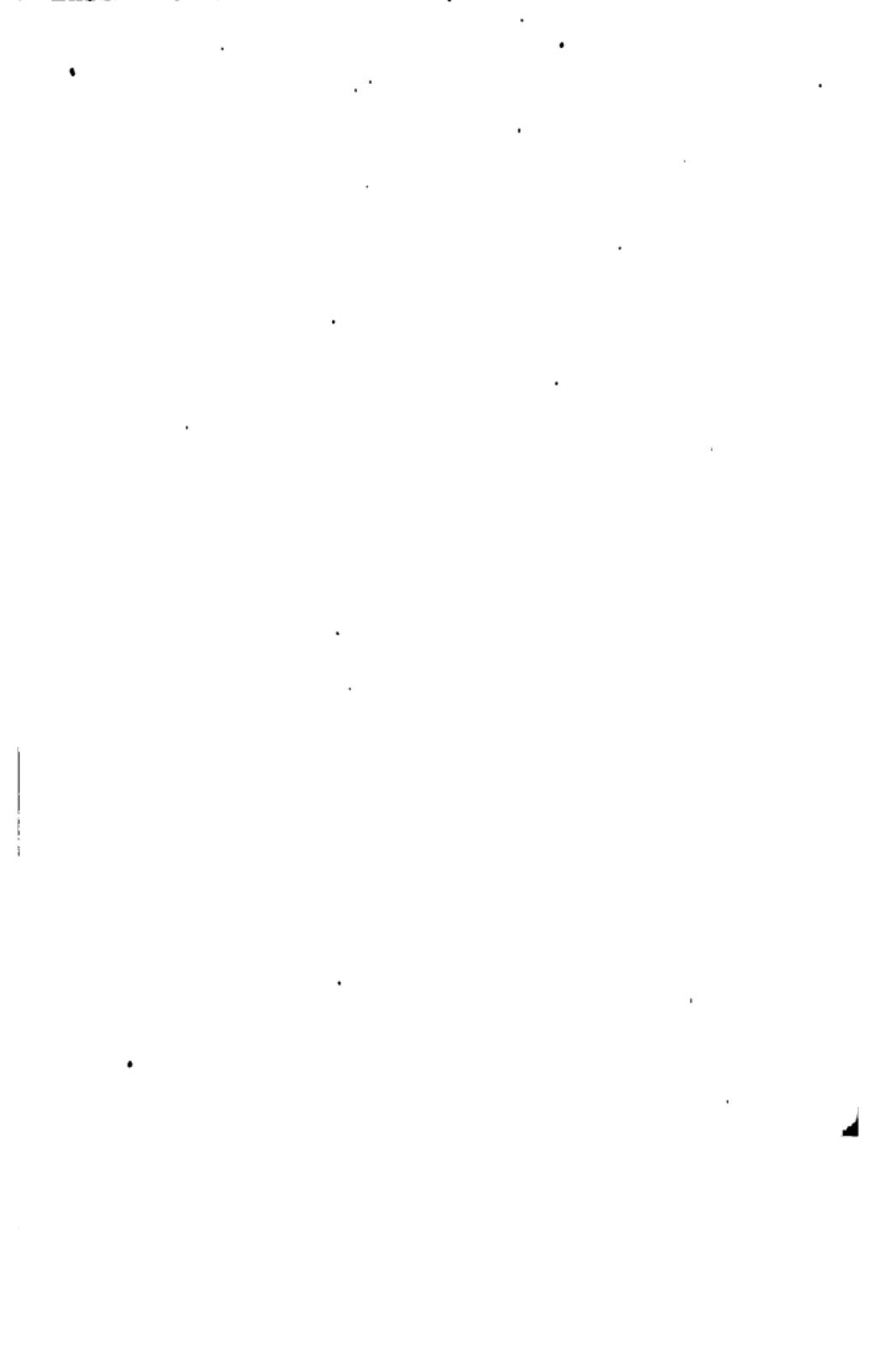


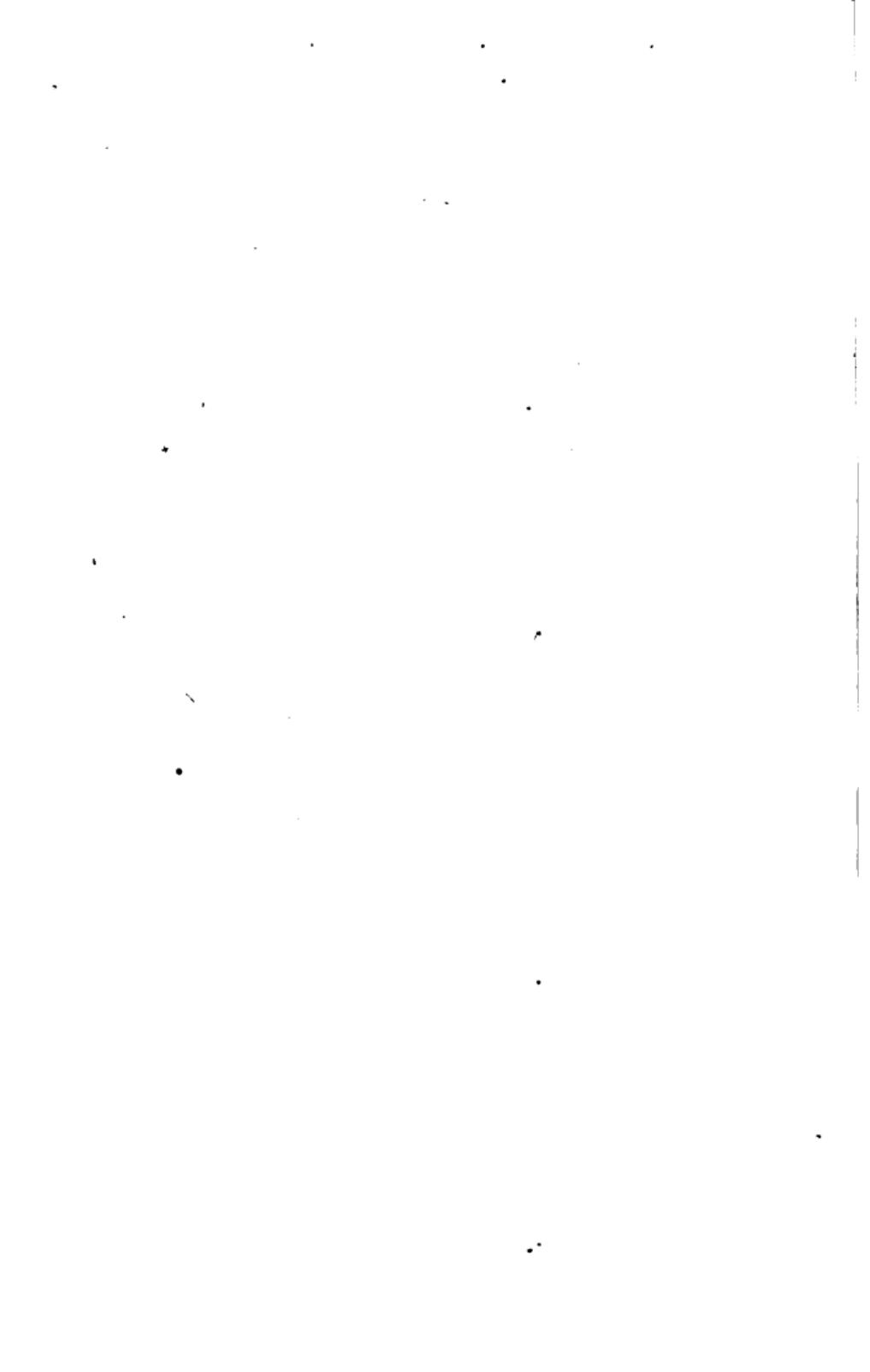
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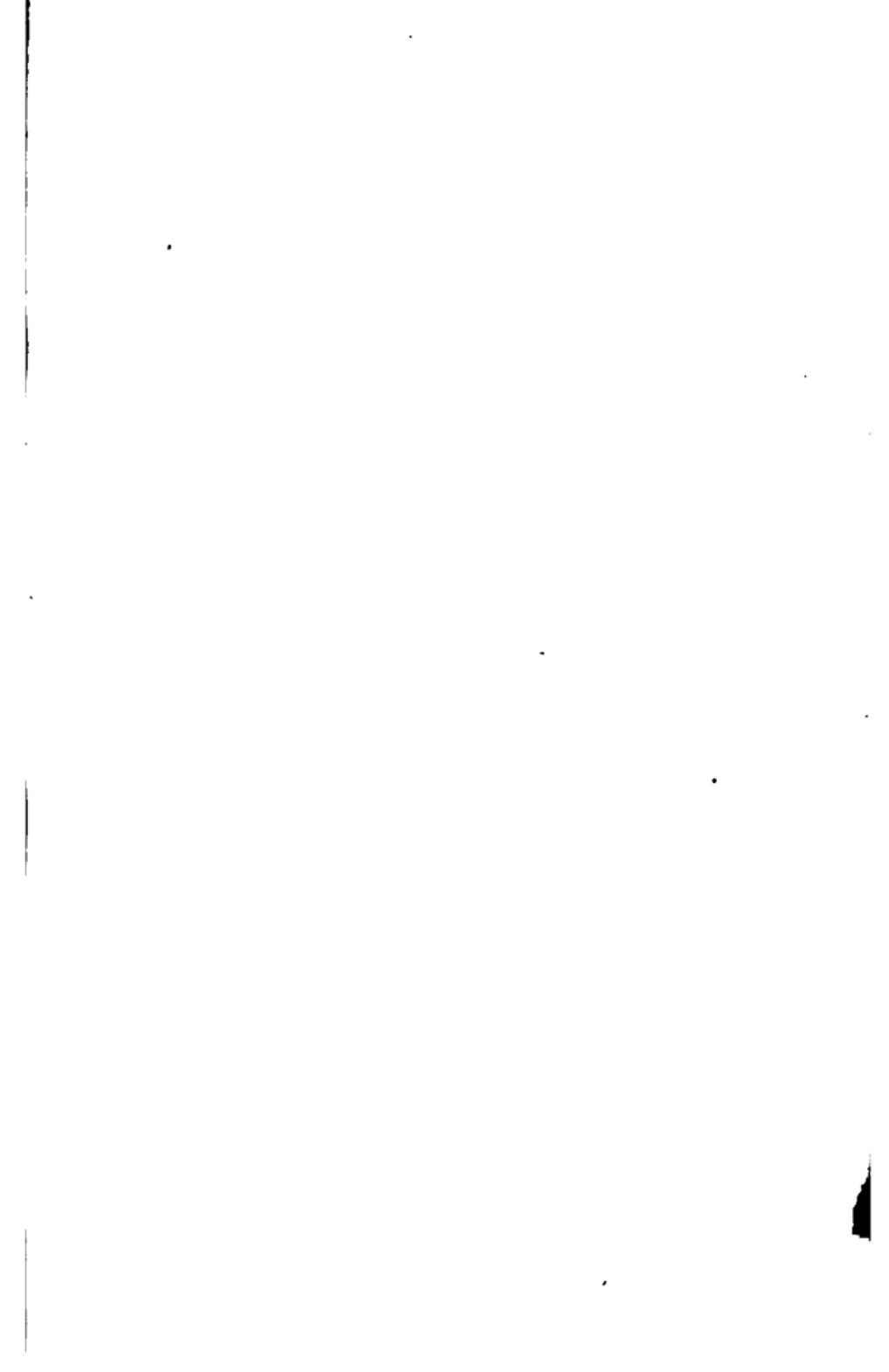
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GLEANINGS

FROM

SCHOOL-LIFE EXPERIENCE;

OR HINTS TO

COMMON SCHOOL TEACHERS,

PARENTS AND PUPILS.

BY

HIRAM ORCUTT, A. M.

PRINCIPAL OF NORTH GRANVILLE LADIES' SEMINARY.



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TO

THE HUNDREDS OF HIS PUPILS,

WHO, AS PRACTICAL TEACHERS, HAVE DONE HONOR
TO THE PROFESSION,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND FORMER
TEACHER.—THE AUTHOR.

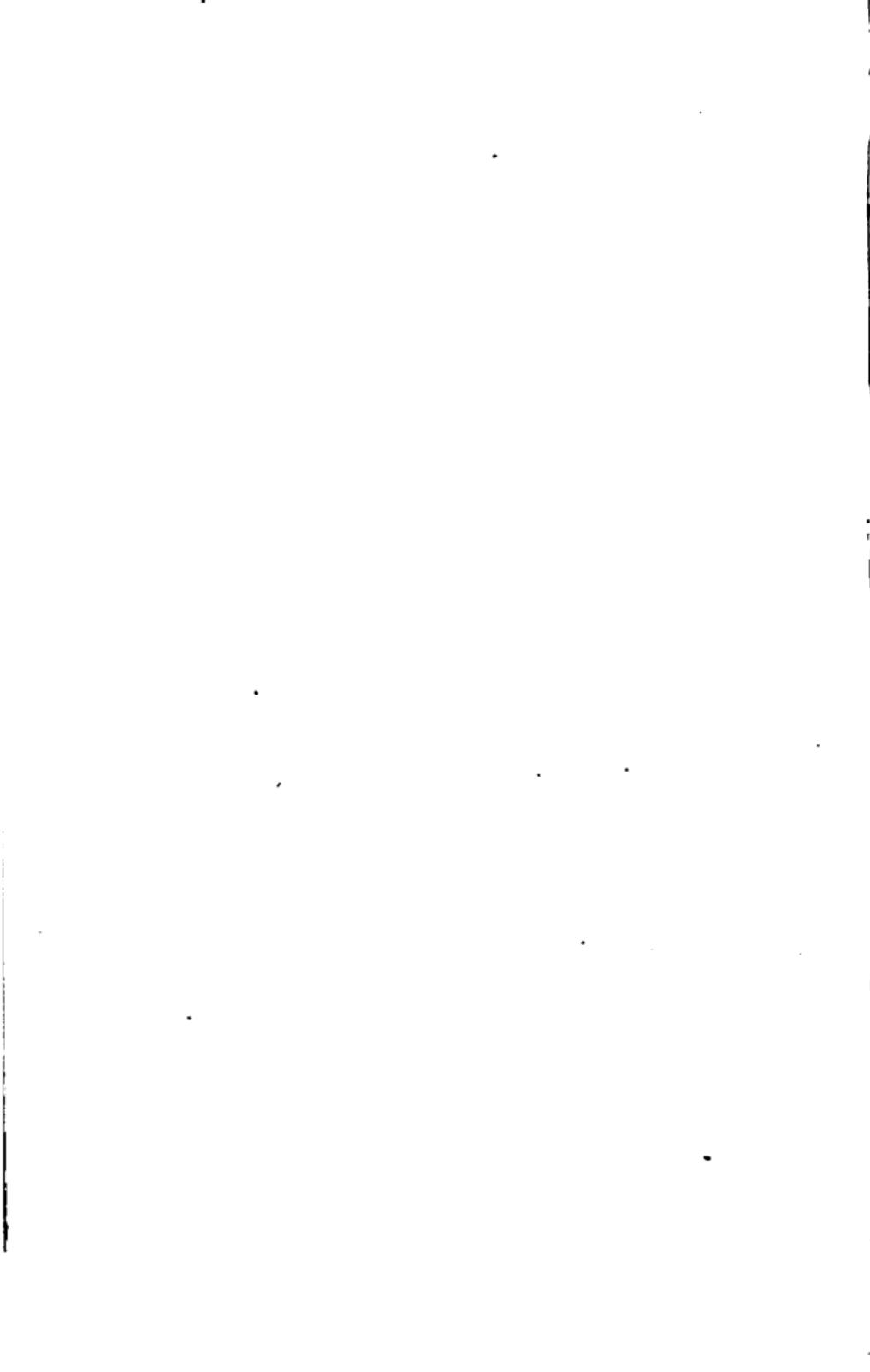
P R E F A C E.

THIS little book had its origin in **EXPERIENCE**. It was not, originally, written with a view of publication but for the benefit of the Author's Normal Classes. The substance of these chapters has been recently published in the form of newspaper articles for the benefit of those employed in Teaching District Schools in this vicinity. It is now republished in a more permanent form, by the solicitation of Teachers and friends, and with the hope of aiding the less experienced in the arduous and noble work of school-keeping. The Author does not aim to discuss, at length, the subjects here treated, but to present to the reader just what the title page indicates, some "Gleanings" from twenty years experience, or practical "Hints" as to the management and instruction of "Common Schools," and the duties of Teachers, Parents and Pupils.

NORTH GRANVILLE, N. Y., Aug. 15, 1858.

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I.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER'S WORK.

THE Teacher and the Artist have their own peculiar fields of labor, but how insignificant the work of the Artist when compared with that of the true Teacher. The one works upon the stone or the canvas, the other upon the undying spirit ; the one creates an imitation of the form and figure of the lifeless body, the other moulds the living and renowned character of the hero, the statesman and the sage. The Artist may attract attention as a man of genius, and his works may be admired as evidence of inimitable skill ; but the true teacher will be remembered with gratitude and admiration by the hundreds who have profited by his instructions, long after he is dead.

The great sculptor, Hiram Powers, has recently completed the bust of the distinguished

Edward Everett, which is said to be unsurpassed by any artist, either in ancient or modern times. Yet, how much greater the work, and more distinguished the artist, who aided in forming the mind of that same Everett, now acknowledged to be the greatest living orator. When but ten years old, young Everett sat before Daniel Webster and received from him, as his teacher, the rudiments of education. More than half a century afterwards, when both teacher and pupil had attained the most distinguished honors and the highest position among their fellow men — the one having passed off the stage of life, leaving the other without a living superior — the pupil sat for his bust before the artist, Powers.

Now, to whom shall we award the praise ? to the Artist, or the Teacher ? to the distinguished Powers, or the immortal Webster and his co-laborers in this work of education ? But the occupation of the Teacher is not only honorable, but of great importance. He is a patron of society. To him is committed the work of training mind and forming character, and at a period

when the most susceptible of durable impressions. The future citizens and rulers of this great nation are now under his care and instruction. It is his to mould their moral and intellectual character, and fit them for the responsible duties of life. To our common schools we must look for those who will soon be called upon to manage the affairs of families, to transact the business of town and state, to fill the vacated Bench of Justice, to sit in the Halls of Legislation, and to direct and control the Church of God. Upon the character of our *schools*, therefore, depends the weal or woe of unborn millions; the perpetuity or downfall of our boasted Republic.

Nor can we stop here in estimating the importance of the Teacher's work. He exerts an influence upon immortal minds. From that canvas no impression can be erased; good or evil, truth or error, virtue or vice, it may remain forever.

How fearfully responsible, then, the business of giving instruction. Yet how few there are who realize the nature and importance of this work. Many enter upon it with less interest

and preparation than the man of business goes to his farm, his shop, or his merchandise. Some dare tread the Teacher's Sanctuary, who have never learned the first lessons of science or morality; who are ignorant, vulgar and profane. How long will such things be tolerated in our enlightened community? How long shall our Common Schools, at once the peculiarity and glory of our nation, receive so small a share of public care and patronage? They are the inheritance bequeathed to us by our Pilgrim Fathers, and shall we, through neglect, allow that inheritance to waste away? We can have no hope of the elevation of our schools except in the improvement of their teachers. Hence no effort, no sacrifice, is too great, on the part of all interested, to secure so desirable a result.

III.

HIS NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS.

MORE depends upon what the teacher *is*, than upon what he *does*. Like the poet, he is endowed by nature with the most important qualifications for his work. This natural talent may be cultivated, but cannot be created, by education.

The true Teacher has a large share of common sense.

This is practical wisdom ; a sort of instinct as to the fitness and propriety of things. It teaches its possessor to do the right thing, at the right time. It acts in the real and not in the romantic world, and adapts one to circumstances, to society and to duty.

There are many opportunities for its exercise in the school room ; many instances when the

want of it imperils the teacher, or proves his ruin. A question of political or judicial economy is about to be settled in his little empire. He has no time for consultation with older and more experienced teachers ; no time to read books on the " Theory and Practice of Teaching." The question must be settled without delay. The existence of his authority, and his destiny as a teacher, depends upon prompt and judicious action. Under such circumstances, sound common sense is the teacher's only security.

Aptness to teach is also a gift of nature, still it may be improved by culture. The most brilliant scholar is not, usually, the best teacher. Quickness of perception and accurate knowledge are important, but the power to communicate and instruct, so as to secure the attention and wake up the mind of the pupil, and lead him to successful self-application, is indispensable. Aptness to teach implies also skill in the selection and use of illustrations. It enables the teacher to adapt his influence and instruction to the peculiarities of his pupils. Some need encour-

agement, others caution, and still others rebuke, as they are timid, ambitious, or self-sufficient.

It guides him as to the amount of instruction to be given, that he may not make the task of the pupil too easy, but simply possible. In a word, it instructs him *when* to teach, *how much* to teach, and *how* to teach.

Earnestness and perseverance are also among the necessary qualifications of the teacher.

These qualities are indispensable to success in any department of labor. Look where we will for examples, the same truth is illustrated. The earnest man succeeds; the indolent, though possessed of more talents and greater attainments, often fails. The earnest and determined teacher not only performs much more labor in the same time, but inspires all around him with his own spirit. He infuses life and animation into the minds of his pupils, awakens new interest in study, and exerts a commanding influence in the school-room, which is felt also in the district and town where he resides. He is a living, breathing, acting spirit. Such a teacher has power by

his presence to create order out of confusion, and to make the school attractive and profitable. Success must attend his efforts.

The teacher should have, also, a sound and well-cultivated mind. A sound mind is not only the foundation of true manhood, but of all successful efforts. It is conceded that respectable talents are necessary to fit the young man for successful business, or efficiency in any one of the mechanical arts or professions. For the factory, the work-shop, the counting-room, we demand young persons of talent, and can less be required of those who are to occupy the important position of Teachers ? And this mind must be cultivated ; must acquire the power to think, to analyze and reason. An undisciplined mind is unfit to educate other minds. It cannot appreciate the importance of systematic culture, or employ the means necessary to secure it.

Without the power and habit of patient and well-regulated thought, the teacher can himself have no available knowledge ; and if he had, could have no power to impart it to others.

Hence, every teacher should be thoroughly disciplined by mathematical and classical study. These furnish the most direct means of securing mental discipline.

Nor is discipline the only advantage derived from such studies. The study of Latin is indispensable to a thorough knowledge of the English language and the most successful way to learn that language. For instance, allow any two individuals, of equal age and equal capacity, to commence the study of grammar, with a view to make the greatest possible attainments in the English language in two years. The one may study English grammar during the whole time, and under proper instruction ; the other shall spend his first year (one-half the time allowed) in the study of Latin,— the second year he may spend in the study of the English language,— and the latter shall be the best English grammarian, when the two years have expired.

The study of the higher mathematics is of great service to the Common School Teacher.

It adds strength and vigor to his mental powers, and affords him a knowledge of the principles necessary to explain arithmetic and the practical natural sciences.

The facts and principles of the branches to be taught must be thoroughly understood. And, if the teacher would do himself full justice, he must extend his knowledge far beyond his present necessity and requisitions.

He cannot teach clearly in the twilight of his own knowledge, nor communicate more definite information than he himself possesses. All branches of science are connected. No one branch can be properly taught and illustrated without the aid of others. With a knowledge of the lesson to be taught, merely, the teacher may be able to throw some light upon the subject before him, but it is like the light of the sun where there is no atmosphere to diffuse and reflect it—all in one direction, and total darkness everywhere else. The range of the teacher's studies should, therefore, be extensive, and

his knowledge liberal. He should be familiar with all the principles that can aid in the explanation of the subjects to be taught. He should gather up and preserve all attainable facts and incidents to be found in the wide field of science and history. All passing events should be preserved for use in the school-room. In a word, the teacher should be constantly *reading, observing and thinking* for the benefit of his pupils and the honor of his profession.

Self-control is also essential to success in school-keeping. Without it, the master is like a ship without a pilot or helm. In calm weather he may experience no serious difficulty, but when the storm comes and the winds blow, as surely they will, he has no security from wreck and ruin but in his own self-possession.

The teacher whose mind is thoroughly disciplined and well-balanced, can command his knowledge; can apply himself to any subject, whether literary or judicial. His understanding, reason and judgment are ready for any emergency. Hence his efficiency.

Self-control also gives authority. To be qualified to govern others, the master must govern himself, his temper and his tongue. His power to quell a raging tumult or crush a rebellion lies in his coolness. Authority is undoubtedly a gift of nature ; but it is, in a measure, the result of other cardinal and cultivated qualities. Principle, decision, independence, dignity, disinterestedness and refinement are *all* commanding. They give power and impression to the whole man ; they speak out in his eye, his steps, his voice, and in all his movements and expressions. Such qualities and such self-control gain for the teacher his true position as instructor and governor of his school.

Last but not least, among the necessary qualifications of the school-teacher here to be enumerated, is moral and christian character. Every teacher should be a model of excellence. No position in life demands higher attainments, as none commands a more important influence. Children are fine copyists. They receive their earliest and most durable impressions by imita-

tion. Their teacher is always sitting or standing before them, for his likeness. The impressions of his feelings, principles and character, and especially the *defects* in his character, are left, in the ambrotype of the school-room, upon the imperishable tablets of the immortal mind. The pupil may be expected to exhibit his teacher before the world. He often assumes his airs, imitates his tones, habits, and almost his very looks. He copies his roughness, stereotypes his oddities, and perpetuates his errors and blunders. The results of these early impressions and of this influence will be felt upon future generations. The teacher is doing his most important work, then, when he seems to be idle.

And let it not be forgotten, that education does not begin with the alphabet, nor end when the scholar takes his diploma. It consists not mainly in tasks and recitations. Character teaches ; intelligence, politeness, kindness, moral and christian integrity, *all* have an important, plastic power in the school-room.

No person, therefore, should presume to enter upon the responsibilities of the teacher, who has not, in active exercise, every principle of true manhood, every element of a noble character—mental, moral and religious.

III.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.

By school management we mean much more than is expressed by school government. The former includes the latter. If a school is properly managed, it is of course, well-governed. Strict government may sometimes be found in connection with bad management. Our whole object will be best accomplished, therefore, by alluding to some particulars in the management of schools.

The teacher's success in the government of his pupils, depends upon a thousand *little* things ; indeed, it depends upon all things that he says or does. He begins to operate for himself, for good or evil, as soon as he enters the district. First impressions of him and his management in school, are usually permanent, and hence very

important. These often determine his success or failure.

It is of the first importance to gain the confidence and respect of the pupils and parents in the district over which he presides. To this end, he should seek an early and familiar acquaintance with all. In the school-room and by the way, his first object should be to gain the confidence of his pupils. It is through them that he must first act upon the parents. Every experienced teacher knows, that if he would gain the confidence of the father, he must first gain the respect of the mother ; and, to secure this object, he must gain the love of the child. Hence he spares no pains to win the affections of the children, in the school and in the family. He improves the earliest opportunity to visit them at their homes ; is social and familiar with all ; adapts himself to the circumstances and peculiarities of each family, and manifests a deep interest in everything that interests them. He freely explains to parents his plans and operations for the improvement of their children,

and thus gains their esteem and co-operation.

In the government of the school, the teacher should not rely so much upon moral suasion or legal suasion, as upon the influence of a well-regulated school, and judicious management in the district and school-room.

In a steam-engine we expect harmonious action only when all parts of the machine are in perfect order. A watch will keep correct time only when all the wheels and springs are in their places, and every part properly lubricated. So a school must be completely organized, systematized and fully employed, or disorder and confusion will be the result. When so regulated its machinery is self-adjusting—order reigns, and the teacher is known as a good disciplinarian. The organization of the school, then, is the first business of the teacher. Nothing else should have his attention, until this is accomplished.

The pupils should be properly classified as to the seats they are to occupy, and the studies to which they attend. The object in view is to prevent disorder and save time. Each pupil should

be so located in the school-room, that he may quietly attend to his own duties and not disturb his fellows. All should be so classified, as to have the least possible number of classes and each pupil in classes adapted to his standing.

Every arrangement in the school should be systematic. There should be a time for everything, and everything in its time ; a time to open the school, which should never vary ; a definite time for every school exercise ; a time for study and a time for recess ; a time to whisper and a time to keep silent. In a word, everything that is desirable or that cannot be prevented, should be provided for and have its own time and place.

Those irregularities that are necessary, should be provided for as really as the regular exercises of the school. Whispering and leaving of seats, should not be allowed in study hours, nor promiscuous questions when hearing recitations. Hence the importance of having a definite time for whispering, leaving seats, and asking questions. This will tend to remove temptation and leave no apology for disorder at other times.

It is important, also, that the pupils have full employment and feel a deep interest in their studies. The old proverb, that "An idle brain is the devil's workshop," has more truth in it than poetry. Each pupil should have just such lessons assigned as can be well learned by industry and earnest application, and should be made to feel that study is the business and the only business of school-hours.

The teacher's success in exciting an interest in the minds of his pupils, depends both upon what he *is* and what he *does*. In this his skill and efficiency will be tested. If he can divert the attention from sport and mischief, rouse from indolence, and fix the mind upon the duties and exercises of the school, his work is half done — his success is certain. Those pupils who have become interested, will be punctual and constant in their attendance, and earnest in their application.

If they are to be deeply interested in their lessons, these must be neither too difficult nor too easy. The mind cannot be interested in

what it cannot understand, nor in what is so simple as to cost no effort. Children are never indolent by nature, but are often made so by bad instruction. Familiar and apt illustrations tend to awaken an interest in classes. Every thought and principle should be clearly explained, and the class recitation thus made interesting. Then pupils will be prompt and earnest. They should be encouraged to investigate and think for themselves—to look beyond their text-books for information.

Special efforts should be made to render the school-room and its exercises, attractive and pleasant. To this end the teacher must feel and manifest a deep interest in all he does, and by his presence and animation, infuse life and energy into those around him. He should seek variety for the same purpose. Does he desire punctuality at the opening of his school? Then let him have some exercise at that time which will interest. Brief and appropriate religious exercises, with vocal music, will secure this object and greatly profit the schools. Let such

exercises be followed by some interesting inquiry, story or illustration of some familiar scientific fact. The pupils will not be tardy, if there is suitable inducement for them to be punctual. Let the teacher lay hold of every incident that occurs in the community, district or school-room, calculated to awaken an interest, and he will not fail to "wake up mind."

IV.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

THE hints upon the preceding pages are designed to aid the teacher in his efforts to prevent evil and secure the improvement of his pupils. The question now arises, if wrong has been committed and wholesome laws and regulations violated, what shall be done?

In answering this question, we would say, *something* must be done — something that will show, without a doubt, that a MASTER has charge of the school.

The teacher's position gives him a right to rule without a rival. It is his duty, at all hazards, to hold the supremacy over his scholars. His will must be law, and that law must be obeyed. The injured pupils may appeal to the Trustees, from whom the teacher derived his

authority, but they may never disobey, however much they dislike his requirements. If, then, obedience has been refused, something must be done to correct the evil, and prevent a repetition.

The object of all punishment is two-fold: first, the good of the school, and secondly, the good of the offender. If the good of both the school and the individual cannot be secured by the punishment, the scholar must be sacrificed and not the school.

The murderer is not usually hung for his own benefit, but for the benefit of society — for the protection of the innocent, and the vindication of law. In most cases, however, in school government, the crime may be so punished as to save and benefit both the school and the offender. How shall this be done? We answer, in general, in a manner adapted to the nature of the offense, and the disposition and character of the offender. It would be folly in the extreme to act by rule in the discipline of a school.

That physician is a quack, who prescribes the

same remedy for every disease. Some patients need only encouragement; others need stimulants, and still others soothing remedies, to allay inflammation or a fever. And there are some diseases that nothing but *calomel* can cure. The physician, then, must study the constitution of his patient and the nature of the disease, and administer accordingly.

So the school teacher must study the disposition and character of his pupils and learn the circumstances and purpose of the crime, before he can prescribe a remedy that will *cure*.

Allow us here to suggest, the teacher should distinguish between the "light of the glow-worm and a spark of fire about to fall into a magazine of powder." If a slight offense has been committed, which threatens no evil result to the school, it were better to take no notice of it. If, on the other hand, the offense is public, and to pass it over would give license to a repetition, and put in jeopardy the teacher's authority, let him treat it with becoming promptness and severity.

He should check the first indications of insubordination. No teacher loses his authority at once. No school that has been kept in proper subjection, assumes the attitude of rebellion. If first indications of improper conduct receive proper attention, more aggravating offenses will not occur. Loose government makes punishments necessary. That master who exercises a mild severity at all times, and keeps his school in perfect subjection, will seldom need to resort to severe measures.

Faults that have an influence upon the school should be corrected publicly, that the whole school may feel the influence of the discipline. If the fault is known only to the teacher, he may punish the offender in private for his own good.

But what degree of severity is to be recommended? That degree which is necessary to accomplish the object; no more, no less.

What kind of punishment shall be inflicted—*moral suasion* or the *rod*? We answer, one or both, as circumstances require. The quack and the theorist only maintains that either moral

suasion or legal suasion alone, will govern schools. The kind word of encouragement, the confidential appeal, the gentle reproof, the stern prohibition, and the severe blow, are *all* appropriate and necessary in school discipline.

And it is a mistaken idea, that corporal punishment in itself is an evil, and to be employed only as the last resort. It is *the* punishment, and the only punishment, that will do in some cases. If the disease requires calomel, sugar pellets will not cure. The mortifying limb must be amputated. It is not as the last resort, but the first and only remedy, to save life. The system here recommended is not cruel, but merciful. It has more of kindness in it than any other. There is no kindness in leaving the child to grow up under the influence of an unsubdued temper. It is cruelty in the parent or teacher not to govern that child. Let the master, then, kindly but promptly, enforce wholesome regulations. Let him enforce them, if need be, by the severe use of the rod. “The rod and reproof give wisdom.” “Foolishness is bound up in the

heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "He that spareth the rod, *hateth* his son."

Many a child has been saved in school, that was lost to the family and society; lost for the want of proper discipline, and saved by the legal and moral power of the rod. Indeed, the utility of corporal punishment in schools, is no longer a debatable question.. Its use and necessity are sustained alike by human and divine authority, by common sense and universal experience.

But this punishment should never be inflicted in anger. Firmness and decision are no more necessary in cases of discipline, than coolness and candor. The pupils must be convinced that the teacher seeks their good only, and reproves and punishes them as a matter of necessity. He will, then, retain their confidence and respect, however great his severity.

Punishment to be effectual must be *thorough*. A half-whipped boy is only aggravated, not conquered. Hence the object of his punishment is not accomplished. The teacher should never

threaten unless he designs to execute, but when the crisis comes, he should leave no necessity for a repetition. We can conceive of no proper punishment that may not be inflicted with all needed severity.

The teacher is responsible for the mode of punishment, as well as for its faithful execution. Any punishment that will inflict a permanent physical injury is unjustifiable. Holding weights in extended hands, "sitting upon nothing," bending forward with the finger on the floor, upon a nail-head, all blows on or about the head with stick or ferule, all violent shaking of children by the shoulders, endangering the delicate vertebræ of the neck, are entirely improper. The teacher who resorts to such punishments, is wanting in common sense and common intelligence.

And, whenever severity becomes necessary, it should be accompanied and followed by faithful counsel and kind treatment. The teacher should never allow the sun to go down upon the wrath of a chastised pupil. He should see him alone, before he is allowed to mingle with his compan-

ions, or return to his home. Otherwise, he may excite sympathy, and create a rebellion. The object to be gained is to win the offender back to duty and cheerful obedience, and thus save the school from anarchy and confusion, and the scholar, it may be, from a course of dissipation and crime. The means to be used are kind and confidential treatment, after the offense has been punished, and the difficulty settled. A few moments spent with the enraged pupil in faithful, private conversation, will often restore him to favor and friendship. Without the chastisement this moral influence would have been of no avail ; with it, is entirely successful.

This mingling of the severe with the mild in discipline, is the more necessary in consequence of the heterogeneous character of our schools. The teacher cannot select his pupils from those families that have been under wholesome influence, but must receive many who have been entirely ungoverned at home ; the current of whose evil propensities has received a steady direction and violent impulse, from long years of

parental misrule and vice. These scholars must be controlled, and, if possible, subdued. It were cruel to reject them from the school, and thus cut them off from the last hope of improvement and recovery from their ruinous course of life. The master must be held responsible for results in the discipline of his pupils; results to be felt in the school, in the neighborhood, and in the world. He should, therefore, possess all the qualifications of a judicious manager and good disciplinarian.

V.

SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

IN a previous chapter we have enumerated some of the necessary qualifications of the good teacher. We now propose to make a few suggestions as to the method of imparting instruction.

And first, as far as possible, instruction should be given to classes, and not to individuals. This is recommended as a matter of economy. Should the teacher devote his time to individuals, in a school of thirty pupils, he could give each only twelve minutes ; in a school of sixty, only six minutes per day. Now let the school of sixty pupils be divided into six classes, and the same instruction given to them, each pupil would have one hour of the teacher's time every day, and

would receive more benefit than from individual instruction during the same time.

In some instances individual instruction should be given, but never when the same instruction can as well be given before the class. Calls for individual assistance should never be allowed during class recitations. There should be a definite time for all private instruction — such a time as will not disturb the regularity of the school, or withdraw the teacher from more important duties.

Again, the instructor should teach subjects and not books ; principles more than facts. The scholar may know all that is contained in the four hundred English Grammars, and yet be ignorant of the Science of Language. He may do all the "Sums" [Examples] in all the Arithmetics extant, and not understand the simplest principles of calculation. Books are useful, but not indispensable. Like a spacious black-board, they aid the teacher in his work of systematic instruction. That they should be used for this

purpose only, is the thing recommended. The pupil should be directed to the science to be taught and should have a full and clear explanation of its principles.

There is more danger of teaching too much than too little. It must be constantly borne in mind, that *discipline* is the end of teaching. The object is not to fit the pupil for any one special trade, art or profession, but to teach him to think, and give him the power and habit of application. The gaining of knowledge is a secondary consideration. It were better to leave this entirely out of the question, than to have it substituted for discipline.

Just so much instruction should be given, then, as is necessary to save the scholar from discouragement and make it possible for him by earnest and persevering effort, to overcome his difficulties, and learn his lessons.

The teacher should never solve an example for a pupil, but guide him in his efforts to solve it; he should never answer a question fully, that the pupil by faithful study, may answer for himself.

It seems superfluous to suggest that instruction should be *thorough*. Yet such a suggestion is often necessary.

No principle or fact should be passed over, until it is well understood and firmly fixed in the mind of the pupil. After the teacher's explanation upon the black-board, the class should be required to repeat it. Each member should not only understand the principles and reasons, but be able to impart his knowledge to others.

Every scholar should be required to begin with first principles, and to advance step by step, until the whole subject is mastered.

In this way only is instruction made available, and discipline of mind secured.

And it is equally important to teach *correctly*. Many do not teach facts; others give no reasons for the facts asserted. Both these systems of instruction are defective. For example, in teaching Arithmetic we inquire of the school-boy,— how many fundamental rules are there? “Four,” is the reply. Some say, “Six.” (It must be so, for the books so have it.) But

what is Arithmetic? "The science of numbers." What do you mean by numbers? "Any aggregate of units." What can we do with numbers? "Add them together [Addition], and take them apart, or compare them [Subtraction]." This is all we can do with whole numbers. Multiplication and Division are short methods of adding and subtracting — not new rules. Addition and Subtraction of Compound Numbers and Duo-decimals, are but the repetition of the simple rules, under a different law of notation.

Addition and Subtraction of Fractions are only adding and subtracting units which have a nominal divisor — the common denominator. In a word, by these two rules, or a modification of them, all the examples in Arithmetic must be solved. When we leave these, we pass into Algebra, or other branches of the higher mathematics.

We inquire further, what is Simple Subtraction? "The taking the lesser number from the greater." But we do not change either number in the process. We only compare the minuend

with the subtrahend, and write down the difference or remainder.

Subtraction then, is a comparison of two numbers to find the difference. But in case the lower figure in the lower number is greater than that in the upper, how do we perform the operation ? “ Borrow one [ten or a hundred as the case may be,] from the next left hand figure, which is added to the figure in the upper number before subtracting. Then carry one to the next left, lower figure.” Why carry one ? “ Because we borrowed.” But we did not borrow, only *supposed* one or ten to be added. We carry then, because we did not borrow — to cancel the one *not* taken away, as we supposed.

Once more, What are Fractions ? “ Broken numbers.” What school-boy understands this ? Broken numbers are no more fractions, of necessity, than units. The one piece of the one-third of an apple is as really a unit, as the apple itself. The earth is a unit, though it is but a small part of the solar system.

In another sense, every finite, whole number is

a fraction or broken number. The world, and even the whole system of worlds of which we have any knowledge, are only parts of one "stupenduous whole." There is then, properly speaking, but one unit in the universe, and that is the *universe itself*.

Broken numbers cannot be fractions, unless considered as parts of a greater whole. Colburn says: "PARTS OF ONE ARE CALLED FRACTIONS." This definition, properly explained, will leave the pupil with correct information, and prepare him for successful future efforts.

But to teach facts is not enough. To make his instructions really valuable, the teacher must give and require the reasons; must give the "why and wherefore" for every statement capable of demonstration.

He has under consideration, for instance, the Arabic or Roman figures. He should proceed, first of all, to inquire for their origin and history. The characters representing numbers were, originally, *straight marks*, and probably written in the following manner:

The Arabic | || 三 □ □ □ □ □ □, have been changed by degrees into their present forms, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. The nine digits with the [0] cypher, constituted the characters by which the processes of calculation were carried on.

The Roman characters I, V, X, L, C, D, M, had their origin also in straight marks. The [I] indicated a unit. The X was made by the crossing of two I's in counting; thus I, I, I, I, I, I, I, X, ten ones. Of these ten straight marks, the last two [X] were made arbitrarily to stand for ten, and the preceding I's omitted. The V is simply one-half of the X (the upper half) in *form*, as five is half of ten. Three I's may indicate one hundred, and may be expressed by \square , or (with the corners worn off) C. One half of \square (the lower half) gives us in form, L, which stands for fifty. Four I's, written in this form, \square , and afterwards in this, M, were made to represent a thousand. And one-half of \square , or D, represented five hundred.

The combination of Roman characters was expressed by addition and subtraction. Thus,

$V=5$, $IV=4$ or $5-1=4$; $X=10$, $IX=9$ or $10-1=9$. And VI or $5+1=6$; XV or $10+5=15$. $MDCCCXXXIV$ or $1000+500+300+30+4=1834$. The nine digits were probably so called from the fact that the fingers [*digiti*] were used in counting. We have *ten* characters representing numbers and no more, because the originators of figures had *ten thumbs* and *fingers*. Hence the fundamental law of notation, “figures increase in *ten-fold ratio*.”

Such familiar illustrations both instruct and interest beginners in this important science, as also in every other.

In conducting class recitations, a free use of the black-board both by teacher and pupils, is very important. All are thus instructed by a single explanation and the instructions are much longer remembered, because received through the *sense of sight*.

The teacher should never consent to teach without this “black-wall” on one side of his school-room. As far as possible also, he should have cube-blocks, globes and maps, to aid in the

explanation of the subjects that come before the classes. And with all, Webster's or Worcester's large dictionary should be upon every school-desk.

When the subject will admit of it, recitation by topics is much to be preferred. This cultivates the habit and gives the power of *expression*—a very valuable attainment. It compels the pupil to think and reason for himself and thus renders his knowledge available. If questions are asked, they should not imply the answer, but should be such as require an independent knowledge of the lesson, to answer correctly. Questions should be asked before the *individual* is called upon to answer, that the whole class may fix their attention. As the lesson cannot be recited until it is learned, the scholar or the class should be required to repeat the same, in all cases of deficiency. The habit of lecturing classes as a substitute for recitation should never be indulged. It tends to prevent suitable preparation of lessons and discourage self-reliance. It substitutes knowledge for discipline and thus defeats the main object of education.

Frequent and thorough reviews are indispensable to successful study. It is not the number of books passed over, nor the length of time spent in school, but thoroughness that makes the scholar. Repetition tends to remove the dross of knowledge and bring out the pure gold. It makes sure what was doubtful and firmly fixes the facts and principles of science in the mind of the learner.

Each day there should be a review of the previous day's lesson; at the end of each week, of all that has been studied during that week and at the end of each term, of all that has been studied during that term. And this study and these reviews should contemplate a thorough public examination, and special efforts should be made to secure the attendance of all parents and friends in the district.

The teacher must learn to discriminate that he may adapt his instructions to different classes of scholars.

The *roots* of all knowledge are and must be bitter. That study which will benefit, must re-

quire effort, as already suggested. The mind must be tasked to be disciplined ; it must be disciplined, to be educated. If, then, we find scholars whose tasks are all easy, so easy that it costs little effort to learn their lessons, we should lay upon them greater burdens ; should rouse them to loftier aspirations. The mother eagle is said to push her eaglet out of its nest for the purpose of teaching it to fly. It were much better that it be exposed to fall, than not to learn to fly. So must our easy, fluent pupils be taught how to make application, that they may train and develope their untried powers and gain strength for the duties of manhood.

Another class of scholars are quick and penetrating, but unpardonably self-sufficient. They are proud to appear well in recitations but anxious to have it understood that they have given little or no attention to the lessons.

Such scholars should be proved with *hard* questions. Let the teacher expose their weakness and show them the difference between sound scholarship, and flippant, boisterous pretensions.

They will thus learn their true position and be willing to apply themselves, as none will do, who feel that they have already attained to perfection.

Thus may flaws be ground away from the diamond. Prune off the leaves and useless twigs of self-conceit, and the fruit of true scholarship will appear.

Another class of pupils are fearful and self-distrusting. They meet difficulties on every hand, but discover in themselves no ability to overcome them. Such scholars need special encouragement. They can be assured that their failures may prove as beneficial to them in point of discipline, as would their success. It is not the finding of truth, but the search for it, that educates the mind. Hence inferior scholars, as they appear in the class-room, often turn out superior men in life. They have shown less brilliantly than their fellows in recitation, but have really made more efforts and hence gained more practical benefit than they. They have received from their teacher less information but more en-

courage and inspiration; this is what they most needed.

For such pupils, the instructor should bend down the branches of the tree of knowledge, but leave them the toil of plucking the fruit. He should lead them by degrees into the difficulties they have to encounter. As they enter the path that leads up the hill of science, they will see but a small part of the height to be scaled. If, when they have surmounted one ridge, another appears, it seems but one more. If, as they ascend,

“Hills peep o'er hills and Alps on Alps arise,”

they will gradually have gained strength and courage to encounter greater difficulties and overcome greater obstacles, till, at length, they can brave the glacier and the avalanche with the fearlessness of a Hannibal or a Kane.

Still other scholars load their tasks with needless difficulties. Like the foreigner who dined at a Yankee table. A boiled ear of Indian corn was placed before him. “Ignorant of the usual

method of chewing the corn and eschewing the cob, he began at the little end and ate it, as one would eat a radish, *cob and all.*"

The teacher should aim to remove such needless difficulties, and to show the scholar how to direct his efforts and apply his energies. With this power of discrimination and adaptation to the disposition and circumstances of his pupils, the instructor will be eminently successful ; without it, he can but fail.

That it is the right and duty of every teacher to impart *moral* instruction, may here be taken for granted.

It were enough to know that the object of the school is not to form scholars merely, but to form and develope *men, citizens, immortal beings.* These citizens are to constitute the community and the state. And what would be the condition of that state which has no regard for justice, integrity, truth, reverence, and no fear of God before their eyes ?

The answer to this question is written in characters of blood on many pages of the world's history.

And if we would avoid a future "Reign of Terror" in America, our Common Schools must be nurseries of *sound Bible morality*. It must be the teacher's business then, to give regular and systematic moral instruction. It is his to aid in laying deep the foundations of public justice; in giving that profound and quick sense of the sacredness of right and the everlasting obligations of truth, without which, law has no sanctity, private contracts no binding force, the pulpit no reverence, justice no authority. In a word, it is his to exert such an influence, and inculcate such principles as will tend to save our youth from vice and crime and to preserve and fit them for the duties of private and public life.

How, then, shall this moral instruction be given? First of all and at all times, the lessons of morality should be taught by example and influence.

Moral and Christian character is an indispensable qualification of the teacher, because, without such a character, he cannot exert a wholesome influence over his pupils. In vain does he preach

homilies upon virtue and goodness, or attempt to enforce moral lessons, while he himself, is reckless and profane. If, however, he is interested in the subject, if his moral sentiments are in a state of healthy activity, his whole deportment will declare it; every thought and feeling that pervade his soul, will be expressed in his words, tones and actions.

And if such be his character, he will seek for modes to benefit his pupils by moral instruction. Nor will he fail to find them.

When devising ways to impart moral instruction, the teacher should not forget that the BIBLE is the source of all genuine morality. To this he must appeal for authority, from whatever source his moral lessons are derived. It is no part of his business to teach dogmas or creeds, but he may impart the soul-inspiring principles, and pure morality of the Holy Scriptures. These gems of wisdom lie scattered all over his field of labor, but like the drifting rocks from the mountain quarry, they have one common locality—the Bible.

It is not recommended that the Scriptures should be used as a common reading-book in school, but for moral and religious purposes *only*. The teacher should, if possible, leave the impression upon the minds of his pupils that the Bible is sacred, unlike all other books and infinitely more valuable. Then will its instructions be clothed with authority and power, and its influence be salutary and sanctifying.

Cases are constantly occurring in the school-room from which moral instructions may be drawn. These should all be improved. Every violation of moral duties in the intercourse of pupils, should be made the occasion of imparting moral lessons. Falsehood, injustice, and profanity are among the bad habits of scholars. The teacher should correct them in such a way that the whole school may be benefited. He should expose in a mild and solemn manner, the folly, sinfulness and degrading tendency of such conduct, and at the same time, appeal to the conscience, wake up, if he can, the slumbering sense of obligation, and thus give tone to public senti-

ment in school. Make such conduct unpopular and it will not be indulged in ; make the offender *feel* that he has wronged himself and his school-mates, and he will not be likely to repeat the act. The delicate conscience of the child is quick to perceive the wrong, and if aroused, will incline him to cultivate the better qualities of the soul by the practice of virtue.

The teacher may employ all legitimate motives to accomplish his object, and he should discriminate in the selection and application of the motives, as circumstances require.

The lessons of school present frequent occasions for moral instruction. Science, Philosophy and History abound in moral sentiments. Indeed, there is a moral in everything ; in every lesson recited, in every school exercise, in every action, thought and feeling of school-life, in every incident that occurs in the busy world around us, and it is the business of the teacher to gather up and apply these moral elements for the benefit of those committed to his care. In what particular manner such facts and incidents should be

employed, must be left to the good sense of the instructor, who is presumed to be interested and anxious for the improvement and welfare of his pupils.

But moral instruction is too important to depend upon casual circumstances.

A specific time should be set apart for some appropriate exercise of this kind. In connection with the reading of the Scriptures, the teacher may explain and enforce the great cardinal duties of life. Such exercises must of course, be short and interesting to be profitable, and may be varied according to circumstances ; but no conscientious teacher will neglect or trifle with a duty so plain and important.

Such instructions in no way interfere with the different religious opinions that may be entertained in the district, nor do they tend to sectarian results. Moral and religious instruction in schools, is merely a war upon *Atheism*. Its tendency and design is to purify and elevate the affections, to regulate the conscience and to guide and control the whole moral being ; to fit the

citizen for the duties and responsibilities of a Christian community, and the immortal man for the blessings of a higher life.

Nor do such instructions interfere with intellectual education. Indeed *moral* culture is indispensable to true greatness and aids in the development and growth of mind, as the heat and light of the sun aid in the growth of vegetation. A plant will grow without these influences, in the dark cellar, but its growth is unnatural and distorted. It may be as *large* as the one whose roots have been nourished upon the hill-side, and whose leaves have felt the gentle breeze and glorious sunlight of Heaven,—but it can have none of its health and vigor. So the *intellectual man* may be great, but it is the greatness of a BURR, a BYRON or a PAINE! The world has felt the influence of too many *such* men. The true man has a sound body and a highly cultivated mind and heart. His passions are in subjection to self-love, self-love to conscience, and conscience to the word and will of God. Such should be the result of Common School education.

V I.

CONCLUDING REMARKS TO TEACHERS.

THUS, fellow teachers, we have aimed to redeem our promise and present to you very briefly, some practical "Hints" upon school-keeping. We trust you will appreciate our motives, with however little favor you may regard our efforts. All that is valuable for you as teachers, must be learned either from those "who have borne the heat and burden of the day," or from your own experience in the "wear and tear" of teaching. Mere theory and philosophy have no place in the management and instruction of schools. The teacher deals only with facts. He is eminently a practical man, and must take a practical, common-sense view of everything. Besides

“Teacher! to thyself,
Thou hast assumed responsibilities
Of crushing weight. A mighty, peerless work,
Is thine. The golden chords attun’d by thee,
Or grown by thy neglect, discordant; not
In time alone, but thro’ the limitless
Expanse of all eternity, shall throb;
And should one note, which thou, by greater care,
More zealous labors, or by added skill,
Might now attune in harmony, be found,
At last, in dissonance with virtue, truth,
Or mental symmetry, in Heaven’s sight,
Methinks a fearful guilt will on thee rest.
Thou hast to do with God’s most noble work!
The image fair, and likeness of Himself!
Immortal mind. That emanation bright
From His Divinity! Sole transfer made
To man, from His own deathless nature! Such,
Instructor, is thy trust! Thus sacred, high,
And precious, e’en beyond all finite pow’r
To estimate, thy holy charge! No work
Of art, or finest mechanism in things
Material, hath e’er so challenged, for
Its right discharge, e’en the vast aggregate
Of human skill.”

Look well then to your qualifications for the great work which you have undertaken. Have you so much common-sense, aptness to teach, energy of character, mental power and cultivation, self-control and moral integrity, as will fit you for the duties of school-life? If you are conscious that you do not possess these qualities

and have not power and determination to secure them, you may safely conclude that you have mistaken your calling, and should at once relinquish it, to engage in some employment less responsible and more congenial to your habits and tastes.

“ For woe to him who brings,
Or ignorance or recklessness to such
Pursuit! Let him the rather dig, or beg
From door to door, his daily food, and live
At peace with God, and in His sight absolved,
Than tamper with expanding mind; for if
Unsightly mould, he doth perchance impart,
No pow'r resides on earth, to e'er repair
The seemless havoc he hath wrought. His work
Howe'er achieved, whate'er its consequent,
How done, is done for aye.”

If, however, you are conscious that you possess the requisite qualifications to enter upon such duties, let your aim be high. Determine to elevate and honor your profession. Let no opportunity for self-culture pass unimproved. No teacher has already attained to perfection; every one should strive still more to cultivate his mind and heart, and to gain general and professional knowledge. This should be the work of every

day of his life. Would you earnestly engage in this work of self-discipline, learn to make the most of *time*.

Great wealth is not usually acquired by “huge windfalls,” but by minute and careful accumulations. The little sums which many would deem of no importance, the pennies and half-dollars are the items which the miser has, year by year, collected and preserved, until he has reared his pyramid of fortune. From the miser’s success, you may learn the nobler “avarice of time.”

The German critic, who learned to repeat the *Iliad* in Greek, had no months, weeks nor days to spare from professional labor. He employed the *minutes* spent in passing from one patient’s door to another, in his daily round of duty. Dr. Mason Good’s translation of *Lucretius* was composed in the streets of London, under similar circumstances.

Dr. Burney, the great musician, acquired the *French* and *Italian* languages while riding on horse-back, from place to place, to give his professional instructions.

Elihu Burritt and Hugh Miller are also illustrious examples of what may be accomplished by a proper use of time, amid the cares and labors of active life. You also should profit by such economy, and learn how to use fragments of time. You should "glean up its golden dust ; those raspings and parings of precious duration, those leavings of days and remnants of hours which so many sweep out into the waste of existence," and employ them all in study and efforts to make yourselves better teachers.

To the same end, you should learn to be punctual. This is important, not only in your efforts for self-improvement, but also for your success in the management of your school. As a habit in life, it is invaluable. Some always post their letters a few moments after the mail has been closed ; reach the wharf just in time to see the steamboat off, or the railroad depot just in season to hear the whistle of the engine, already thundering by. By such tardiness much time is lost and much inconvenience realized. So in school-life.

“A LITTLE TOO LATE,” will produce evils that industry and perseverance cannot remove ; will waste precious moments that no pains nor toil can recover. Be punctual, then, in every school-duty, and also in those personal duties that pertain to your own improvement.

Method and promptitude are also essential to your improvement and success. They will prevent confusion and irregularity. If you have no system, or delay until to-morrow what ought to be done to-day, a part of your necessary or desirable work, will remain undone through the week, through the year, and through life. “A time and place for everything,” should be written over your door, engraven on your memory, and wrought into your fixed habits. Then school-duty will be pleasant and will be performed, and much time saved for self-culture.

Finally, enter upon your duties with a full conviction of their importance and of your own individual responsibility. You must cherish this feeling or you can have no motive to put forth suitable efforts to become a true teacher.

The community is yet ungrateful and insensible to the importance of your services ; hence they offer you but a meager compensation, and give you but little encouragement. Still it is true that you “stand in the highest and best place that God has ordained to man.” It is yours “to form a human soul to virtue, and to enrich it with knowledge—an office inferior only to creating power.” You stand on holy ground.

“O, then, be wise!
Be every measure of thy choice, to aid
In forming deathless intellect, the fruit
Of earnest study, and of zealous care;
E'en looking to the boundless future of
Its destiny. Thou may'st be popular,
Perchance, but seek not popularity
As motive-spring of any act, in thy
Profession. Valiant be, and ever dare
To do the right, tho' all the gathered hosts
Of error may oppose. Then, if thou fail
On earth, thy well-earn'd measure of applause
To gain, that nobler tribute from the skies,
‘Well done thou good and faithful servant,’ shall
Thy glorious mission crown.”

VII.

OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.

THE education of a young Prince or Princess is regarded in royal governments, as an important matter, affecting, as it must, the welfare of nations. The selection of a proper tutor for such an heir to the throne, always excites a deep interest and solicitude throughout the kingdom or empire.

But we are a *Nation of Sovereigns, and our children all princes of a future generation.* Yet, with how little comparative solicitude, do parents and teachers in our community, enter upon the great work of Education. How little interest is felt in the character and success of our Common Schools. How small the capital invested in school houses, apparatus, books and *teachers*, (if we may judge by the amount paid

for their services.) And do they expect a liberal income from this investment? Would they expect it in any other department of labor or trade, under similar circumstances? Let us suppose the mechanic, the farmer, or the merchant, should invest so meagerly, as a means of carrying on his business, what but a disgraceful failure would be the result? Yet there is no investment that pays so well as the necessary expense of a first class district school; a spacious, convenient and tasteful house, a good apparatus and suitable books and a well-qualified, efficient and *expensive* (because well qualified) teacher. As a mere matter of dollars and cents, we repeat it, *no investment pays so well.*

Railroad and Bank stock is often *below par*. Manual and mechanical labor may, for various reasons, fail of their reward. But intellectual and moral culture, a sound and practical education for our children, is always available; is a better security against future want, *than any amount of money can be*. Besides, the very property now in possession of these parents,

would be largely increased in value, if the condition and character of these schools were elevated ? What is a good farm worth in Sodom ? Yet, the education of our children, in the proper sense of that term, is all that can prevent any district or neighborhood from becoming a Sodom. How then, is it possible for parents to manifest so little interest in the welfare of their schools ? Why bestow so little care upon the selection of teachers ? Why take so little interest in the school while in operation ? Are they in the habit of visiting their schools ? Yet, what a stimulant would such a habit furnish the teacher and his pupils. If this habit should become general, the change would mark an era in the history of education in our community and result in untold good. No other kind of business or enterprise can prosper without care and oversight, and can this be an exception ? Will parents, forgetful of their own best interests and the welfare of their children, continue to toil *only* for wealth ? And for what end ? The absolute injury, and perhaps, the ruin of their children, unless they are also

educated. Cruel, wretched policy ! When will parents learn wisdom ? When will they seek to secure for themselves and their children, the lasting benefits of a thorough Common School Education ?

The children and youth in our families and common schools, have also a deep interest in the matter. Indeed, the good that may be accomplished by our educational system as it is, and the desirable improvements that should be made, depends very much upon the pupils themselves. The best teacher in the nation, and the best school-house, and the best books, will not, necessarily, make good scholars or secure the desirable advantages of a good school. Those pupils who choose to remain ignorant and become vicious in spite of instruction, may always succeed. If, on the other hand, there is a full determination to learn and a consciousness of individual responsibility, scholars will improve with limited advantages and little instruction, or with no instruction at all. How many of the great and good men of our country have reached the high places of

honor and usefulness, with even less advantages than our pupils at present enjoy. When young, they felt the importance of self-reliance and perseverance, which alone can insure improvement and give success under any circumstances. By industry, economy and laborious effort, they surmounted every obstacle and gained the desired object. Whether the school shall be good or bad depends as much upon the scholars as teacher. It must follow, therefore, that there are mutual and reciprocal duties to be performed. Not a child nor a youth attends our Summer or Winter schools who is not, in a measure, responsible for the good or bad results of the teacher's efforts; who has not power to aid in improving and elevating the school, or in rendering it worse than useless. The pupils have not to perform the duties of the teacher or parent, but those peculiar to their own sphere and within the reach of their own ability.

How then, shall they be qualified to fulfill their obligations? We answer, first, they must regard it of great importance to improve all their time and opportunities to the best advantage.

The *minutes* gathered up from the strand of youth, are indeed the *golden* sands in the hour-glass of life. Will our pupils allow them to run out in indolence or folly ? If so, manhood will become a barren waste, or a frightful desert. This is true when applied to intellectual improvement. With diligence and perseverance any youth in our common schools may become a good scholar ; may acquire a substantial, thorough education, sufficient for all the ordinary pursuits of life. All should aim, while yet in the common schools, to become good readers, writers and accountants, and to acquaint themselves with the Constitution of their country and the laws of their moral being. If school-houses are poor and books ill-adapted ; if teachers are inefficient and parents indifferent, *pupils* should feel more interest and put forth greater efforts ; should resolve to overcome all these obstacles and become men and women worthy of the age and country in which they live.

It is important, also, that the youth in our schools, should realize the danger of bad habits.

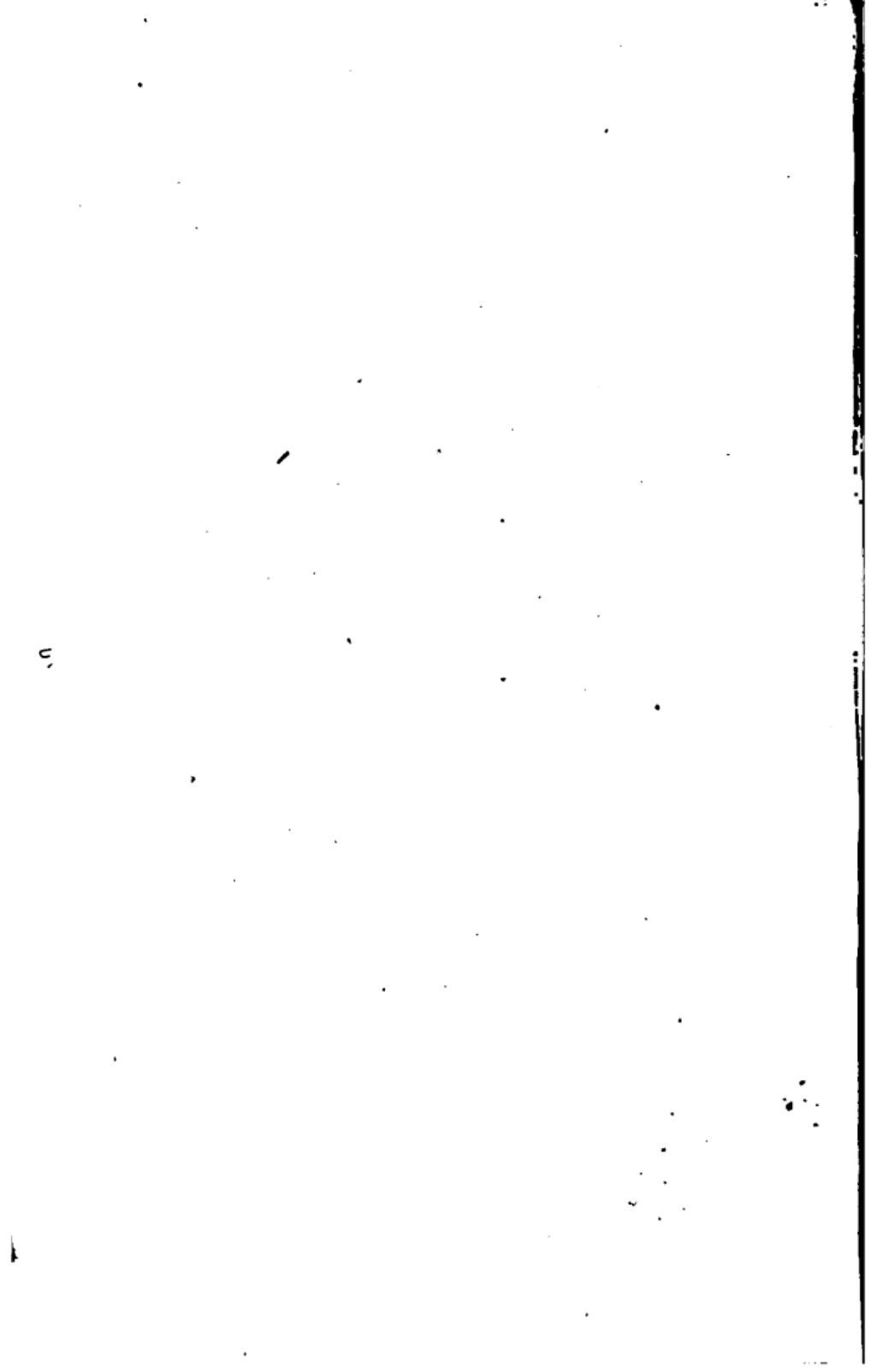
Many suppose that it is brave and manly to disregard the authority of parents and teachers ; to indulge in roguery, dishonesty and profanity. But all such should remember that the false, vulgar, wicked boy, is on the direct way to a useless, vicious manhood, and a miserable old age. Every act, thought and feeling of childhood and youth, has an influence in determining what manhood shall be. School-life for the pupil, is emphatically a preparation for the future ; the seed-time whose harvest will be "wheat" or "tares," joy or sorrow, according to the seed which is sown. Pupils should act from principle, and always dare to do right. A true spirit consists in following the dictates of a noble nature, and he alone is a coward who can be shamed out of his principles.

And let it not be forgotten that it is the teacher's business to govern and the scholars' duty to obey. The relations they sustain to each other, make this necessary, and all well disposed scholars will aim to comply exactly with the regulations of school. The interests of both teacher and pupils are the same. The true teacher la-

bors and lives only for those committed to his care ; his honor is in their progress and his happiness in their highest good. Those who disturb his plans or hinder his success, therefore, triumph in their own defeat and glory in their own shame.

Our Common Schools should be the *best* schools in the town, county and state. To secure this object, not only must good school-houses be provided, well-qualified teachers employed and a deep interest felt by parents in the welfare and improvement of the school, but pupils must be docile and obedient,—prompt, punctual and faithful in the discharge of all their duties. Then we should find in our families and community, better sons and daughters, kinder brothers and sisters, truer friends, nobler patriots, more virtuous, more devoted, more faithful servants of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST.**





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